

DRAFT HUNTER EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL
PARTIAL RESPONSE TO COMMENTS RECEIVED AT 2012 IST AND BEFORE
APRIL 30, 2012

(5/7/2012)

- Use of only inert firearms in the classroom will detract from the teaching and learning experience.

Response: WDFW has modified this policy. There are four options for classroom safe firearms in the final policy. They include inert firearms provided by WDFW; personal firearms verified by two Instructors to be unloaded and using only inert (dummy) ammunition, or made temporarily or permanently disabled; non-WDFW loaned firearms verified by two Instructors to be unloaded and using only inert(dummy) ammunition, or made temporarily or permanently disabled; or firearms that have been donated, purchased with donated funds, or purchased with grants for Hunter Education purposes that have been made temporarily or permanently disabled.

WDFW worked with the Instructor Advisory Committee (IAC) to develop protocols for how each type of hunting equipment can be made classroom-safe through modifications making them either permanently or temporarily disabled. We recognize that some firearms will be needed for classroom, field course, and perhaps live-fire exercises so temporary classroom-safe modifications must be reversible in a timely fashion.

On an interim basis a viable classroom safe method will be independent verification by two Instructors that personal or non-WDFW loaned firearms used in classrooms or during field courses are unloaded and using only inert ammunition. This option will not apply to state owned/assigned firearms or those firearms obtained by Instructors through donations or grants for Hunter Education purposes.

Verified inert firearms may make it more likely to get Hunter Education training into schools.

WDFW is seeking clarification from the Attorneys General's Office on whether persons precluded from handling or possessing firearms can legally handle a certified inert firearm.

- If I provide WDFW with the serial numbers for my personal firearms or non-WDFW loaned firearms, what assurances do I have that such information will be protected and not be released to the public federal government as part of a records request or registration program? What authority does WDFW have to require that serial numbers for personal firearms be supplied that does not violate the Second Amendment?

Response: WDFW has modified this policy. WDFW will no longer require the make, model, action type, and serial numbers for personal firearms or non-WDFW loaned firearms. Only the number of such firearms being used and the caliber/gauge will be required. However, make, model, action type, caliber/gauge, and serial numbers will still be required for any firearms obtained by Instructors through donations or grants for Hunter Education purposes.

- An annual review of the entire policy manual by every instructor is overkill and would be extremely hard to facilitate.

Response: WDFW has modified this policy. All Hunter Education Instructors will have to sign a Hunter Education Instructor Agreement by December 31, 2012, indicating that they have read and agree to abide by the *Hunter Education Policy Manual*, in order to maintain certification. Instructors will also be required to review policy updates and sign a Hunter Education Instructor Agreement at the end of any year when new policies are adopted.

Instructor applicants must review the entire current policy manual and submit a Hunter Education Instructor Agreement agreeing to abide by all policies before being certified.

- Why require the wearing of WDFW-issued Hunter Education Instructor vests in the classroom and during field exercises? Why not allow the wearing of WDFW-issued shirts by the instructors who still have them?

Response: WDFW has modified this policy. Classrooms often become very warm, so instructors may wear either WDFW-issued instructor vests or WDFW-issued instructor shirts to meet the requirement in the classroom, but WDFW-issued instructor vests must be worn during field activities. Also, name tags have been added to allowable additions to vests.

- The two-instructor requirement and no instructor-student one-on-one requirement are unworkable and confusing.

Response: WDFW has made clarifications in both policies. The two instructors need not be in direct contact with each other at all times. But a minimum of two instructors (a registered volunteer or instructor applicant may serve as a second instructor) is required to conduct any Hunter Education class or field activity. Both Instructors need to be on the premises, however.

All activities must be conducted in the presence of at least three people, including the instructor, other Instructors, other students, or parents/guardians.

Many other states already have similar Hunter Education policies in place.